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RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 2301
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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: INDO-PAK RELATIONS; NEW DELHI.

This countrywide cable reports on relevant media reaction/opinion from India's large non-English press. The Mission reports on English-language media via email through the daily "Early Edition" summary.

INDO-PAK RELATIONS

¶1. "THE UNCONTROLLABLE TALIBAN," editorial in February 24 centrist Marathi daily, SAKAL: "It is time to see, particularly for the U.S. -- which is spending considerably on anti-terrorist initiatives -- as to how and why Pakistan is unable to rein in the Taliban. The recent kidnap and beheading of two Sikhs in Pakistan's tribal belt by the Pakistani Taliban is a telling comment on the complete lack of control of the Pakistani government over the extremist forces. Is the war against terror a weak directionless campaign with no definite results?"

¶2. "PAKISTAN AND TERROR," editorial in February 23 Hindi daily, NAVBHARAT TIMES: "The killing of three Sikhs shows how powerful the Taliban have become in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA). The Pakistan government obtains fat U.S. aid for combating terrorism, but when India talks about terrorism it raises the Kashmir issue. Most of the terrorist attacks on India have links in Pakistan. Under these circumstances, why should India not insist on having terrorism as the main agenda of the upcoming India-Pakistan dialogue on 25 February? If Pakistan has

a clear conscience, it should avoid supporting the Taliban to meet its vested interest and recognize the ground reality."

¶3. "MEANINGLESS TALKS," op-ed article in February 23 Hindi daily, DAINIK JAGRAN: "India is again showing excitement and large-heartedness for the foreign secretary-level talks with Pakistan, but is it really worth it? India should not resume talks with Pakistan unless it stops letting its soil be used for anti-India activities. Is it an exercise by India just to make the U.S. happy? We should remember Pakistan does not want friendly relations, but only Kashmir. What does India want to prove by talking to this shameless neighbor? It would be better to strengthen our defenses and concentrate on fighting our internal enemies."

¶4. "CRUSH INFILTRATORS," editorial in February 24 right-of-center Gujarati daily, GUJARAT SAMCHAR: "While on the one hand the Indian government is making all out efforts to resume the dialogue process with Pakistan, the Indian army chief has sounded warning bells on the increase in infiltration across the border. Pakistan has been actively encouraging infiltration as a tool to carry out nefarious activities in India. It is high time that Indian authorities took credible action to put an end to this."
ROEMER